

Who Cared About the Rust Belt in the Early 1980s?

NEW YORK LABOR HISTORY ASSOCIATION

PRESENTS

An online screening of

The Last Pullman Car

a 1983 Kartemquin Film

Followed by a Q&A with director/producer/writer Gordon Quinn
and media historian/critic Patricia Aufderheide

Wednesday ♦ May 28, 2025 ♦ 7:00 pm (EDT)



GORDON QUINN

co-founded Kartemquin Films in 1966 and has served as its Executive Director and then Artistic Director. He produced or directed over 30 films (including the well-known *Hoop Dreams*) and was the co-director and writer of *The Last Pullman Car*.



PAT AUFDERHEIDE

is a prolific writer on the social impact of film and other media. She is University Professor in the School of Communication at American University. Her book *Kartemquin Films: Documentaries on the Frontlines of Democracy* was published in 2024 by University of California Press.

Topics for discussion include the present state and future prospects of documentary films on labor issues.

FREE — Connect to the Zoom event using this hyperlink:
<https://tinyurl.com/May28PullmanNYLHA>



IT'S OFTEN SAID that Americans failed to notice the dire effects of globalization and deindustrialization until it was too late. But that take on history omits not only many books and articles but also the documentaries made by the Chicago-based Kartemquin Films in the early 1980s.

This group of independent filmmakers responded with interest when approached by steelworkers who wanted to reveal what contract negotiations are like in the neoliberal era.

Among the nonfiction films Kartemquin made about union locals is the award-winning *The Last Pullman Car* (1983) on the threatened shutdown of the only plant in the U.S. still producing passenger train cars. The film sets a 1981 labor crisis into a broad historical context.

